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MEXICAN MAIOLICA.—The collection of tin enameled pottery has been increased by two unusual jars, eighteen inches in height, painted in blue enamel in Chinese style, with irregular medallions containing flowers, surrounded by dark blue ground with ornaments reserved in white. They were made in Puebla, Mexico, between 1700 and 1760 and are distinguished additions to the collection, which has been further enriched by a plate fifteen and a half inches in diameter with conventional floral pattern in colors combined with dark blue, representing the period of about 1800 when the monochrome blue painting was superseded by polychrome decoration.

E. A. B.



DECORATED TINWARE

In certain parts of Europe, notably in France, Russia and England, a peculiar kind of metal-work was produced in the eighteenth century, known as *Tôle* (the French word for sheet-iron). An instructive article on this subject, by Elizabeth Lounsbury, was published in *American Homes and Gardens* in July, 1914. This ware is an alloy of iron with a certain percentage of lead, zinc or tin, at first beaten out by hand, but later rolled by machinery into thin sheets. The surface is japanned in various colors—red, black, yellow or green—on which are painted or stenciled the decorations in colors or gilding. Some of these earlier productions have been beautifully painted by skilled artists.

An imitation of this *tôle* work was attempted by some of the American tinsmiths in the first half of the nineteenth century, but instead of using the thicker *tôle* they employed the ordinary sheet tin or tinned iron, japanned with ground color and painted with bold designs in bright colors. Such ware was made through the third quarter of the century in Philadelphia and in some of the neighboring counties, and was exceedingly popular with the country people, particularly the Pennsylvania Germans. Many of the local tinsmiths produced it for their customers, at a time when tinware began to take the place of the decorated pottery which had for a century or more been used almost exclusively for household purposes. The small local potworks were gradually closed and the art of slip decoration about the middle of the nineteenth century became practically extinct.

In the Museum collection of historical antiquities are numerous examples of painted tinware. The forms of the pieces, such as tea-pots, mugs, tea-canisters, fruit-dishes, snuffer-trays and waiters, are quaint, often graceful in outline, and the colorings are brilliant and frequently gaudy. The ground was usually a bright red, black, yellow, bronze or dark green, while the designs consisted principally of flowers, birds or fruits boldly painted in various colors.

Tinware was also decorated, at a somewhat earlier period, by etching the designs on, or pricking them in, the surface. These two processes were totally different and probably show the work of separate localities, or at least the varied methods used by different workmen. In the first process the pattern appears to have been outlined by metal wheels with serrated edges, the figures after-

wards being filled in by hand with short strokes of a graver. These serrations and lines were cut through the thin film of tin which covered the sheet iron beneath. By this treatment the ornamentation appeared darker in tint than the bright tin of the surrounding ground, producing a pleasing effect without the use of applied coloring. A coffee-pot in the museum collection is embellished in this manner with tulips, birds and waving bands of etched work (see illustration). By the other process the design was pricked into the surface, showing the same technique as that of the pin-pricked paper pictures of the period, by employing a sharp metal point, prepared stencils being used as a guide for the



TIN COFFEE POT. ETCHED DECORATION.
Early Nineteenth Century.

work. A coffee-pot owned by the Rev. John Baer Stoudt of Northampton, Pa., is of this character, the design being composed of a vase of flowers and bands of ornament. Some idea of the date of such pieces may be obtained by the fact that this example was a bridal gift for the grandmother of the present owner, who was married in 1844.

E. A. B.



HOW OLD SILVER IS RUINED

This Museum has gradually built up an interesting and valuable collection of old American silver, among which are many examples which have been presented by our patrons and friends. Philadelphia was an important center